

# MEETING SUMMARY

**MEETING:**     South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team

**DATE:**   February 28, 2002                      **TIME:** 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Vee Quiva Casino

## ATTENDANCE:

Wade Accomazzo, Accomazzo Company  
David Anderson, GRIC District 4  
Carlie Billen Back, South Mountain/Laveen Chamber of Commerce  
Lee Banning, Maricopa County Farm Bureau  
Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA  
Chad Campbell, Sierra Club  
Patrick Castellano, Twelve Oaks  
Chuck Crist, Lakewood HOA  
Chuck Cunningham, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce  
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee  
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council

Sharolyn Hohman, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Angela Mazzi, Valley Forward  
Robert Moss, United Arizona Dairymen  
Nathaniel Percharo, Pecos Rd/I-10 Landowner Association  
Laura Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development  
Jim Stroger, Kyrene Lagos Elementary School  
Anthony Villareal, GRIC District 6

## STAFF:

Dave Anderson, HDR  
Thor Anderson, ADOT  
Debra Duerr, HDR  
Ralph Ellis, ADOT  
John Godec, GRA  
Theresa Gunn, GCI

Bill Hayden, ADOT  
Pat Ramos, Lima & Associates  
Mark Schlappi, MAG  
Bill Vachon, FHWA  
Mary Viparina, ADOT  
Rita Walton, MAG

**MEETING SUMMARY:** Jennifer Graziano, GCI

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**NEXT MEETING:**   Thursday, March 28, 2002

## ACTION PLAN:

Task/Activity	Who	By When
Send information on the Joint Village Planning Committee Meeting to the CAT	Gunn	March 4
Provide copies of the Vision 21 Report to the CAT	Gunn	March 4

## HANDOUTS:

- City of Phoenix General Plan Brochure
- General Plan of Phoenix Plan Summary and Land Use Map
- National I-10 Freight Corridor Study
- Valley Connections Newsletter
- Ahwatukee Foothills News Article
- Level of Service Website Information
- Summary of RARF Study Findings

- I-10 Auxiliary Lane Project Flyer
- Revised Project Schedule
- Pat Ramos Presentation Handout

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

John Godec, GRA, opened the meeting by asking the members to introduce themselves. He reviewed the handouts and asked members if they had any new issues or concerns to report. He also reviewed the CAT member roles and responsibilities.

- Public Accessibility – John reported that we have had requests for others to attend the CAT meetings and have had calls from the media requesting information on CAT members. After break CAT discussed these issues.
- Open meeting only means that the public is allowed to be in the audience.
- Hold a public meeting on a quarterly basis.
- More public meetings in the community will reduce the desire to attend CAT meetings.
- If you don't open up for public comment, any recommendations will be challenged. CAT should conform to the open meeting law.
- If we have only 1-2 people come, it is better to include them. We can let them talk at appropriate times.
- Group is really not making any decisions.
- Members are reporting out at other public meetings. If we get too many people at CAT meetings, we will get bogged down.
- Ok for people to attend, but if we allow them to talk we are opening a can of worms. Only allow public to speak on a case by case basis.

## **PROJECT STATUS**

Dave Anderson, HDR Engineering, gave an update on the planning/technical status of the project.

- The project is still in the early stages. There are many (nearly six hundred) major tasks that need to be completed. We are currently nearing task 100.
- Aerial mapping was delayed, but is now completed, which is important for many of the subsequent studies.
- Draft purpose and need document has concluded that there is a need for the project and the stakeholders have concurred with this finding.
- Alternatives development and screening process has begun.
- Modal assessment and traffic sensitivity screening is underway.
- Screening criteria has been developed for the first and second level screening of alternatives.

Theresa Gunn, GCI, gave an update on the public involvement program. Theresa reported that presentations have been made at the following meetings: Maricopa County Farm Bureau, GRIC District 1 and Realty Executives Realtors. Staff also had a booth at the GRIC Community Fair. Upcoming presentations include the following groups: Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development, Foothills Club West Community Association Meeting, Ahwatukee Foothills Homeowners Association Annual Meeting and a joint meeting of Estrella, South Mountain, Laveen and Ahwatukee Village Planning Committees.

## **REGIONAL TRAFFIC MODEL**

Rita Walton, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), gave an overview of MAG and socioeconomic projections used in modeling.

- Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is a volunteer association of cities and towns in Maricopa County, the Indian communities and the unincorporated areas.
- Planning activities include: land use, environment, human services and transportation.
- MAG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), is required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to do the regional transportation planning, and by the EPA for the air quality conformity analysis.
- State requires MAG to make the socioeconomic projections.

### **How does MAG do the Modeling**

- The most recent census data is used as the base. The following information is also used:
  - General plans for each community.
  - Information on existing land use.
  - Employment data from companies with 5 or more employees at any one site.
  - Development information of what is being planned.
- Three tier modeling: 1) county level, 2) regional, 3) traffic zone.
- The model is in a GIS.
- General plans are the vision for the model. The model analyzes factors that influence growth.
- MAG Regional Council establishes direction.

### ***CAT Member Questions and Comments:***

- **Question:** Which general plans are you using? **Answer:** The most recent version available from each of the cities.
- **Question:** How can we ensure we have the water to support the future growth? **Answer:** Developers are required to have a 50-year assured water supply.
- **Question:** Have you done the air quality studies for the South Mountain alternatives? **Answer:** They will be done in the future.
- **Question:** Doesn't highway locations affect the socioeconomic projections? **Answer:** Because MAG also does the transportation modeling, they are able to share data.

Mark Schlappi, MAG, gave an overview of the Transportation Model.

- The Transportation Model forecasts future demand. It is calibrated with existing traffic counts.
- The model area is 60x90 miles with 1541 traffic zones.
- The model tries to reproduce people's travel behavior by analyzing:
  - Trip generation

- Trip distribution
- Mode choice
- Highway and transit assignment
- Calculation
- Review the traffic network and transit system in the 2025 model.
- 2040 – 100% increase in population = 140% increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). But, the region only has a 30% increase in roadway capacity planned.
- Current projects underway to update model data:
  - 4,000 household survey
  - Travel speed study
  - Traffic volume study
  - Freeway bottleneck study
- There is the perception that ADOT is arbitrary and capricious by making decisions based on politicians. Decisions are not arbitrary. ADOT has a process and criteria for making decisions. The Regional Freeway System was based on modeling.

#### ***CAT Member Questions and Comments:***

- **Question:** How do you determine when the forecast doesn't lead to adequately built freeways? **Answer:** Limited funding plays a role and the model is only one criteria in freeway planning.
- **Question:** I am concerned that it is assumed larger families with higher incomes are considered bigger trip generators. Maybe it should be flipped to show that lower income families make more trips? **Answer:** Size of household is more of a factor. Above \$30,000/year the number of trips seem about the same.
- **Question:** Do you take into account induced traffic? **Answer:** MAG believes they have addressed this issue. This EIS process will further address this issue, as requested by EPA.
- **Question:** If a freeway reduces congestion does it reduce air pollution because of higher speeds? **Answer:** Generally, yes. The EPA does studies on the relationships of congestion and air quality.
- **Question:** When you project travel time do you show travel times to other locations? **Answer:** Yes. We can show travel times for any of the zones.
- **Question:** Do the Transportation Area Zones (TAZ) correlate to census tracts? **Answer:** No. Census tracts are based on today's conditions. Transportation zones look into the future and follow jurisdictional boundaries.

#### **SOUTH MOUNTAIN TRAFFIC MODELING**

Pat Ramos, Lima & Associates, gave a presentation on the South Mountain Traffic Modeling. Pat stated that they are looking for answers to the following questions.

- What are we trying to do? Where is the demand? What is the magnitude? Is the demand local or regional? Where is it coming from? How much traffic will be on the road?
- If we complete all of the 2025 transportation improvement networks, does it meet the demand?

- The accepted/desirable traffic flow for this region is level of service D (moves but slower than speed limit).
- Model is multi-modal. Highway projections already have assumed a percentage of the demand will use other modes.
- The model will help identify a corridor to satisfy the future demand.
- MAG has a truck traffic model. The project team is reviewing the data.
- Added the volumes for each road/freeway to determine total volume for east-west traffic.
- Added number of lanes of roads available. Added TDM strategies and increased bus ridership. Used national standards for these strategies in reducing demand by 5 percent.
- Twenty-seven percent of projected traffic demand in 2025 is excess demand. Equivalent to eight (one direction) freeway lanes or 25 arterial lanes.
- Now that we understand the magnitude, how are we going to deal with the excess demand?

#### ***CAP Member Questions and Comments:***

- **Comment:** Concern about how traffic moves through neighborhoods not just on freeways.
- **Question:** How do you know where the trips are going to and coming from? **Answer:** From the select link analysis.
- **Question:** How do you define local vs. regional traffic generation? **Answer:** Regional trips are usually defined from one city to another. City of Phoenix zoning codes have mileage standards for local and regional traffic generators.
- **Comment:** Concern that there is not a mileage definition for regional traffic. **Response:** If the CAT wants to define a local vs. regional trip MAG will look at it.
- **Question:** Do you take surveys of people and find out where they go? **Answer:** Yes.
- **Question:** Why are we not looking at alternative modes? **Answer:** MAG is starting a high capacity study that is looking at various options and there are several other transit studies underway. In order to sustain high capacity transit systems, the region needs high density.
- **Comment:** South West Valley is looking at a commuter rail demonstration but flex schedules make transit schedules difficult to plan.
- **Comment:** How far are people going to walk to transit and use multiple modes in summer time? It is not a reality in Phoenix.
- **Comment:** We need a systematic tax system that benefits people who work closer to where they live. During the zoning process we need to stop large employers and large regional malls. Control traffic demand through zoning.
- **Question:** What were the Vision 21 Task Force recommendations? **Answer:** We will provide information to the CAT.

#### **PLUS/DELTA MEETING EVALUATION**

Members were asked to write what they liked and disliked about the meeting using a plus sign for things they liked about the meeting and delta signs for the things they would like to change.

- + Lots of information to educate on traffic, food, plenty of material to review

- + Good discussion and questions, food
  - + Presentations were informative
  - + Great dinner, excellent quiet server, informative handouts
  - + Just keep more to agenda, allotted time to each segment
  - + Great materials, dinner
  - + Good speakers, presentation materials easy to see, good dinner
  - + Time, food, presentations
  - + Presentations by Mark, Pat and Rita
  - + Food, handouts, speakers
  - + Location, food, information
  - + Looser atmosphere
  - + Good information to provide background
  - + Very well put together, too much information to take in
  - + New information helpful, excellent food, appreciate handouts
  - + Place, dinner, focus on traffic
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- Δ Room too cold, too technical give summaries not details
  - Δ Tighter agenda – will come with time I'm sure, little noisy
  - Δ John interrupting/restating speakers, room temperature
  - Δ Need more opportunities to take action as a task force, temperature too cold
  - Δ A little too detailed, cookies again, warmer room
  - Δ Presenters tend to drag out presentations – need more condensed
  - Δ Keep to agenda – don't run over
  - Δ Warmer
  - Δ Chill, length of meeting
  - Δ New location
  - Δ Temperature
  - Δ Need to start on time
  - Δ Smoke, noise, travel distance, interest in getting to alternatives
  - Δ Need more discussion on impacts on GRIC
  - Δ Some defensiveness by presenters (MAG), smoke in building not good
  - Δ Change for next time – need to focus on South Mountain area